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BROTHERHOOD

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE CONSECRATION

OF THE

Cardiff New Synagogue

ADAR 22ND, 5678—MARCH 6TH, 1918

BY

THE VERY REV. THE CHIEF RABBI

(Dr. J. H. HERTZ)



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SERMON

PREACHED AT THE CONSECRATION

OF THE

CARDIFF NEW SYNAGOGUE

ADAR 22nd, 5678—MARCH 6th, 1918

כָּל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת מֹשֶׁה בֶּן עֲשׂוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֶת כָּל הָעֲבֹדָה : וַיֵּרָא מֹשֶׁה אֶת כָּל הַמְּלָאכָה וְהִנֵּה
עֲשׂוּ אֹתָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה בֶּן עֲשׂוּ וַיְבָרֶךְ
אַתֶּם מֹשֶׁה :

“ According to all that the Lord commanded Moses,
so the Children of Israel made all the work. And Moses
saw all the work, and behold, they had done it ; as the
Lord had commanded even so had they done it. *And
Moses blessed them.*”—Ex. xxxix. 42-43.

These verses are taken from this week's Scriptural
Lesson, dealing with the building and the completion of
the Tabernacle during the wanderings of the Children
of Israel in the Desert. The time was short and the

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work was great ; but the labourers were stirred with a holy enthusiasm, and moved by a spirit of willing sacrifice. Their reward therefore was indeed much. It was given unto them speedily to complete the work, and to earn the blessing of Moses. The Rabbis have preserved for us the very words wherewith Moses blessed them : **יְהִי רָצוֹן שְׁתִּשְׁרָה שְׁכִינָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיכֶם** : “ May it be the will of God that the Divine Presence ever dwell within this work of your hands.”

You, likewise, have completed a great and sacred task. In these distracting times, men and women have with willing hearts and loyal souls made it possible for this new sanctuary to be erected in this community. And to-day we are assembled to call down the blessings of Heaven upon their work and solemnly dedicate it to the glory of God and the advancement of our Holy Faith. And far beyond the borders of this city, of this country even, does the House of Israel note with deep and vibrant interest the establishment by you of this new Jewish Place of Worship. The reason of such additional interest is, alas, to be found in the terrible conditions that this world-war has produced in a large

portion of Jewry. It so happens that nearly one-half of the entire Jewish people are inhabitants of the lands that once were the ancient kingdom of Poland. These 600 miles of territory have for over two years been the fiercest battle-ground in this unparalleled war. Cities were taken, and again and again retaken by the rival armies, according to the ebb and flow of the conflict, with attendant bombardments and burnings, pillagings, expulsions, and—calculated inhumanities. And as ever, a double share of suffering has fallen to the lot of Israel. Hundreds of Jewish communities have disappeared, and their Synagogues and their Seats of Learning have fallen a prey to the fire and fury, destruction and desolation that characterised *both* belligerents in the Eastern war zone. For some time to come, it is only in English-speaking lands that something can be done towards restoring the equilibrium of Israel, by creating new centres of Jewish religious life and Jewish religious endeavour. One such new centre of Jewish religious life and endeavour we are consecrating to-day. Verily, the eyes of our brethren from far and near are upon us—their felicitations, their benedictions, yea, their prayers, accompany us. And these prayers that rise to

their lips are the words of Moses : **יְהִי רָצוֹן שְׁתַּשָּׁרָה** **שְׁכִינָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיכֶם** “May it be God’s will that the Divine Presence ever dwell within this work of your hands.”

My friends, this is a rare and golden moment in the spiritual history of the sons and daughters of this congregation. At this hour the divine summons comes to you to consecrate not merely these walls, the work of your hands—but your souls, your lives, to the service of God and of Israel. In this sacred hour, therefore, let me impress upon you the indispensable condition of the Spirit of God abiding within this Tabernacle ; the one and indispensable condition, likewise, of *any* healthy communal activity in Israel, viz., *that peace, amity, brotherhood, be the keynote of your lives as Jews and as citizens.*

In ancient times, the very stones which went to the building of an altar had to be rough and unhewn, called in Hebrew **אֲבָנִים שְׁלֵמוֹת** i.e. “peaceful stones.” This is to point a moral of transcendent importance, the old Rabbis teach us. No sword, no iron—the symbol of violence, discord, war—shall be lifted up in connection

with even the stones of an altar : כִּי הִרְבֵּךְ הַנֶּפֶת עָלֶיהָ וְתַחֲלֶלָהּ “ If thou lift up thy iron tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.” Over the portals of a Jewish House of Prayer the worshipper should ever see in letters of light the words : “ All hate abandon ye who enter here.” All Israelites, whether belonging to this, that, or any other Synagogue, are brethren ; and the world holds them all responsible one for the other. Only with brotherhood as the keynote of your congregational, and inter-congregational, life can Cardiff Jewry be a worthy link in the chain of Israel. All, therefore, should live in accordance with the Jewish watchword : חֲזַק חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזַּק “ Be strong, be strong, and let us strengthen one another.” Verily, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

But it is the Jew's primal duty to unfurl the banner of brotherly love, not only within but without the community. Ben Azzai held the Brotherhood of Man to be the fundamental principle of all religion ; and the later Rabbis declared : לֹא נִתְּנוּ הַמִּצְוֹת אֵלָּא לְצִרָהּ “ The supreme purpose of all the

commandments is to weld mankind together in one fraternal bond." In an age when preachers of race-hatred have arisen even in this land of freedom, let every Israelite by his life and conduct show to the world that the truly pious avoid everything that introduces uncharitableness, dissonance, or disharmony of feeling between themselves and their fellow-men. As in the days of old, our Synagogues must once again earn the title, "Schools of holiness and love to all men." In this harsh world, there can never be too much charity of speech, charity of judgment, charity of action. And this law of brotherhood is not too hard or too wonderful of performance by mortals. As a Chassid—a Jewish pietist—once quaintly said: "Ah, pity the wicked! How hard and strenuous is the road which they must travel in order to acquire Gehinnom, compared with the ease with which the righteous gain Heaven. Gehinnom is acquired by means of strife, hatred, passion, toil and trouble; whereas Heaven is acquired by means of gentleness, charity, brotherhood and peace."

And lastly, the Synagogue stands for brotherhood between man and man on the wider arena of the life of

nations. Alas, how real is the timeliness of such a teaching in these days when dreams of humanity that but yesterday were within grasp of realisation have dissolved into thin air in face of the scientific slaughter of this Tragedy of the Nations ! The world-war is raging on with an unearthly fury, and it threatens to become the grave of all human feelings, of all those usages hitherto observed by civilised peoples that have lifted them out of savagery. A mighty nation has arisen and has challenged civilisation. It is defying the free nations of the world, and the spirit in which it is fighting them is the spirit of Cain. Great Britain will never sheathe the sword till that spirit is exorcised ; and, like Israel, Great Britain has an absolute faith that truth, and justice, and love can conquer untruth, injustice, and hatred, without resorting to untruth, injustice, and hatred. For centuries has there not been greater need than there is to-day that the Synagogue once more proclaim to the children of men the message of the Hebrew prophet : " Have we not all one Father ? Has not one God created us all ? Why then do we deal treacherously every man against his brother ? "

Now the Synagogue can only effectively preach this world-embracing and world-redeeming doctrine of brotherhood between man and fellow-man, if Israel to Israel is true, if the Jew stands for resolved memory of his own glorious past. And the Jewish sanctuary is that divine institution which keeps the Jew's memory ever sleepless, ever fresh. By means of Sabbath, festival and fast, by means of Service and school, Prayer and Scripture Lesson, pulpit instruction and class teaching, Israel's memory will be preserved and enriched through this Synagogue. The Divine Presence will then abide within this work of your hands. This additional fortress of the higher life, this new "monument to the Unseen" in the Cardiff community, should enable all those that take shelter within its shadow to resist the constant wearing down of high ideals and lofty purposes. It will teach them the true perspective of life ; that there is a living which is a dying, and a dying which is life eternal ; that it is not length of days, but the cause, hopes, ideals for which one has lived, that matter. It will widen for them man's horizon far beyond the borders of mortality ; it will keep alive within them the sense of the God-likeness of our nature ; and, in our brief journey

from infinity to infinity, it will impress upon them the truth of the Prophet's saying : " Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches ; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth, and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness in the earth : for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Amen.

Almighty God, Father of the spirits of all flesh, we give thanks unto Thee with all our heart that Thou hast blessed the work of our hands and enabled us to erect this building to Thy Glory. Unto Thee do we now consecrate it that it may be a place for Thine honour to abide in for ever. Preserve it from all evil, all danger, all profanation. To Thee, O Lawgiver of Sinai, we consecrate this holy Ark. Grant that the Torah may be, and remain, our greatest treasure on earth, the Book of Books, the Rule of Rules, the Law of Laws. O Keeper of Israel, send out Thy light and Thy spirit to all who shall teach Thy word in pulpit and in classroom. Pour out Thy spirit upon them that Thy

truth from their lips may enlighten the eyes of their hearers, old and young.

Grant Thy heavenly reward to all who by helping this sanctuary have joyfully given back unto Thee a portion of Thy gifts unto them. Take under Thy providence all this congregation, inspire them with Thy spirit, which is a spirit of love and forgiveness, that concord and peace may ever prevail among them. Grant them a life free from care and grief, a life marked by piety, honour, peace and health ; a life in which the desires of their heart shall be fulfilled, whensoever they are for their good.

Make us all, of whatever rank, station, race or creed, worthy to have Thy Divine Presence abiding with us. Hear us, O our Father, when we pray unto Thee on behalf of our dear country. Be with those who have manfully dedicated their lives for her safety, honour and welfare ; who toil for the speedy coming of the days when man shall no longer hate or destroy fellowman ; when Thy tabernacle of peace shall be spread over all the inhabitants of earth. Amen.

“Ye are my witnesses”

“There is a time to keep silence and a
time to speak”

TWO ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE SERVICES
OF THE JEWISH RELIGIOUS UNION ON
SATURDAY, APRIL 7 AND 14, 1906

BY

CLAUDE G. MONTEFIORE

“Ye are my witnesses.”—ISAIAH xliii. 10.

“There is a time to keep silence and a time to speak.”—
ECCLES. iii. 7.

I

WHY do I bring these two passages, extracted from such wholly different authors, written at such widely different periods, here together? The reason will become clear to you as I proceed.

No statement is more customary, and none more accepted, than the statement that Judaism is not a missionary religion. It is frequently put forward by non-Jews as a proof that Judaism has no claim to be regarded as anything more than a tribal or national faith. Christianity, Mahommedanism, Buddhism—these are, it is alleged, world or universal religions, which have sought, and seek, to expand, and which are all capable of expanding. Judaism was, is, and ever will be, the narrow religion of one petty race. But what is regarded by the one side, if not as a reproach, yet, at least, as a mark of inferiority and an anachronism, is oddly enough regarded by the other side as a merit and a distinction. That Jews court no proselytes, that

Judaism does not seek to convert others to its own ranks, are favourite statements, I might say, favourite boasts, among Jews themselves. What others consider a stigma, we apparently consider a merit.

Are you and I sufficiently able to free ourselves from prejudice so as to see things as they are? Can we with profit consider upon which side the truth lies, or whether, as is not improbable, there is some truth on both?

I hardly know whether I need remind you that the merit or the stigma—whichever it be—of seeking and making no proselytes was not applicable to Judaism at every period of its history. At one time Judaism was undoubtedly a missionary religion, and large sections of Jews were eager to make proselytes. Nor were they unsuccessful. There is no doubt that in the three hundred years, from, say, 250 B.C. to 50 A.D., a large number of Gentiles became converts to Judaism. I cannot enter here into this most interesting chapter of our religion. Nor did the converts suddenly cease after the foundation of Christianity. They still continued, though, doubtless, in diminished numbers. Even when Christianity became the state religion of the whole Roman Empire, the attractive power of

Judaism did not completely disappear. The Church and the orthodox Emperors had to pass the severest and cruellest laws against all Jewish proselytism and against all converts to Judaism. Under the strain and compulsion of these laws, conversions gradually ceased. The danger both for converters and for converted became too great. The party or section among the Jews which, all along, had been more or less opposed to conversion and missionary enterprise, was strengthened by the bitter logic of facts, and thus very gradually Judaism shrank back, or was forced to shrink back, into its own shell, and to relinquish every attempt at expansion and enlargement. A virtue was made of necessity, and various arguments were found to prove that Judaism was not, and should not be, a missionary religion.

So for generations things have stood, and so they stand to-day. The Jews openly boast that they make no active effort whatever to disseminate their religion, that Judaism does not seek or desire proselytes, that it is not a missionary faith.

Let us, first of all, consider whether, *a priori* and in the abstract, it is really a thing of which any religion may fitly boast that it is not a missionary faith.

It is to be presumed that the adherents of any

religion believe that their religion is the truest and the best. The orthodox members of any faith, more especially, hold that their religion is not only true, but wholly and perfectly true, and that any other religion, so far as it differs from theirs, is imperfect and false. They consider that truth is a good and precious thing in itself, and that they are fortunate and happy in possessing it. The believers of most religions, moreover, believe that religious truth and moral goodness are very near partners, very close allies, so that, other things being equal, the truer your faith, the better and deeper your righteousness. On this ground, again, they rejoice in their possession of truth, and their joy is reasonable and legitimate.

Is it then to be wondered at that the adherents of most great religions are anxious that others should share in the truth which they themselves enjoy? Is it wonderful that they desire to extend the borders of truth, and to make the skirts of error more narrow? Is it unreasonable, if God be the author of truth and the lover of righteousness, that they should think that they are doing His will and serving Him rightly when they make the votaries of truth more numerous, when they seek to give to the largest number of men the chance to live

the highest possible life ? The purest knowledge of God is theirs ; the best and truest way to serve Him is known only to them. Are they not thoroughly justified in wishing to diffuse and make known this precious knowledge, this consummate boon, as widely as possible ? Is it not selfishness to wrap up their jewel in a napkin, and to say that none shall see its glory but themselves ? Will they dare to say that truth and goodness are the prerogative of a single race, and that others neither can nor may be admitted to the inner shrine where God is most fitly worshipped and most truly known ?

The answers to these questions are plain and obvious. It is *not* surprising that every religion, which is more than a mere tribal cult or national worship, should seek to propagate what it believes to be the highest truth leading to the noblest life. And this desire can be quite independent of, and can legitimately survive, the belief that true faith is necessary for salvation after death. For truth and righteousness are ends in themselves, quite apart from their effect upon the human soul in its destiny beyond the grave.

Hence the strange thing is *not* that Christianity and Mahommedanism attempt to enlarge the number of their adherents, but that Judaism, if it

be not a mere tribal religion, does not. But no monotheistic creed can be tribal. If there be one God and one God only, as all the great Theistic religions affirm, then all men are His children, and if all men are His children, it is surely desirable that they should know as much about their Father as possible, that they should all worship Him most purely, and that, through the truest knowledge of Him and of His laws, they should live the best and noblest lives.

How, then, can any monotheistic creed be *proud* that it is not a missionary faith, that it does not gladly and eagerly welcome new-comers within its fold? Why are its fences high, its gates barred? Why is admission grudgingly granted? Why are not the barriers thrown down?

We have already seen how from sheer pressure of necessity Judaism ceased to be a missionary faith. And just as the Jews were forced in certain countries to wear a distinctive garb, and as, when the compulsion to wear it ceased, they nevertheless clung to the dress as if it were a part of their creed, so we have seen that when the outside ban upon all missionary effort was largely removed, the very desire for expansion, the very approval of it, had wholly passed away.

But when self-consciousness gradually awoke, when in the middle ages the Jews began to philosophise about their religion, and when in modern times they made comparisons and heard them made, theories were constructed to account for and to justify the fact that Judaism, though more than a tribal, was yet not a missionary faith.

To some of these theories I now invite your attention. One of the first, perhaps, was the theory of Maimonides. It was that Christianity and Mahommedanism were divinely intended to be the stepping stones to Judaism. They were, so to say, to do the rough work, and pave the way. Then, in the fulness of time, the doctrines of Judaism would be universally accepted. The jump from Paganism to Judaism was too great : the two daughter religions were intended to provide the bridge. Maimonides knew little history, yet, even so, his theory is not without its value and its truth. But it is totally inadequate. For, as a matter of fact, Judaism had been well able to proselytise successfully before Christianity was founded, and if it be said that the conception of God in Judaism is more abstract and purer than the conception of God in Christianity, and is therefore harder and less attractive, this argument, which at best is

dubious, is inapplicable to the case of Islam. It may, however, be properly interjected here that if the theory of Maimonides be regarded as true or as part of the truth, it ill becomes those Jews who accept it to laugh at, or show contempt for, the missionary efforts of Christianity in the heathen world. For these efforts, according to Maimonides' theory, are divinely intended and ordained. And, in any case, it seems to me strange that the desire to reveal to others the highest religious truth, which, as we all believe, must produce the highest moral righteousness, should evoke a smile or a jest; it is strange that when men and women give up years of hardship and self-sacrifice to the realisation of this desire, their labours should be regarded by anybody, whether within or without their own body, with superciliousness or derision. But I pass from this observation—and what I have condemned as strange and infelicitous may be largely explained from all that Jews have had to suffer at the hands of Christians, and from the too often immoral methods of the conversionists—to a second and more modern theory.

It is argued that Judaism teaches that salvation after death does not depend upon what you believe, but upon what you do. It teaches that jus-

tification is not of faith, but of works. Over and over again is that solitary sentence of the Talmud—an excellent sentence in its way—trotted out and made to do duty, “The righteous of all nations shall have a share in the world to come.” But this theory, too, is very inadequate, and it is, moreover, becoming rapidly out of date. For, to begin with, you cannot separate—as I have often pointed out to you—a man’s faith from his actions. For actions, to some extent at least, are dominated and controlled by faith. Justification, if such a thing be, is not by faith and not by works, but by something which is above them and includes them, and that is character. Not what you *do*, not what you *believe*, is, so far as you are concerned, the most essential thing, but what you *are*. And what you are is an amalgam of both works and faith. And, secondly, the reason why it is a right and proper thing, and a good desire, to propagate and extend your faith is not merely because of the effect of right faith or of error upon your soul after death. The idea that error is moral turpitude is foolish and exploded. The soul of an Australian savage may deserve and may receive, so far as we can tell, a far gentler treatment after death than the soul of many a

Christian and many a Jew. That is no longer the point. The point is, as we have already seen, that truth and the higher righteousness which truth produces, or can produce, are ends in themselves, quite apart from any question of rewards and punishments after death. They are ends in themselves, and as such, and not as means to secure future happiness or to avoid future pain, do we legitimately desire to extend their limits and increase their sway.

We cannot, therefore, get rid of the duty of making the truth known by any easy self-justification, or by any easy argument such as is contained in quoting the adage, "The righteous of all nations shall have a share in the world to come." Moreover, be it noted that even this famous and much-used sentence only speaks of the righteous. The wicked of all nations are apparently to be excluded from a share in future blessedness. But are they outside our care? Are they beyond the providence of God? It has been the weakness of all dogmatic religions that they have contemplated the fate of the wicked and the hostile with equanimity or satisfaction. But such narrow ideas have happily passed away. Is it, then, not clear, if truth and righteousness have

any connection whatever—and remember that Judaism has boasted to possess not merely the truest conception of the Godhead but an exalted ethical code—that the number of the wicked among the nations must necessarily be reduced, when they are taught religious and moral truth? Jews are never weary of pointing out the virtues which their faith has caused. They are a righteous people *because* of their religion. But is truth not universal and catholic? Surely, then, those who are in possession of truth, and *through* that truth are righteous, should not regard the wicked among the nations with indifference and unconcern? Should not the light which shines upon Israel be allowed to shine freely upon all? Should not the truth which Israel possesses be carried afar? Should it not be actively diffused throughout the world so that truth and righteousness may by our agency be increased, and the dark dominion of ignorance be narrowed? “I will also give thee for a light to the nations that My salvation may be unto the ends of the earth.” With which conception of our religion do these words cohere? To *their* writer is Judaism, or is it not, a missionary faith?

To meet these arguments, and others like them,

a fresh theory has been invented to account for and to justify Jewish abstention from all propagandist endeavour. This theory attempts to face both ways, and like most such attempts, it is not particularly successful. Judaism according to this theory both is and is not a missionary faith. It fulfils its mission by silence. Some twenty-three years ago public attention was called to this very question by a famous lecture given, if my memory serves me rightly, by Max Mueller in Westminster Abbey. The distinguished philologist and philosopher attempted to show that the higher and universal religions—those which counted and would count in the modern world—were by necessity missionary; Judaism neither was nor could be a missionary religion, and was therefore a merely tribal or national faith with no power of development or extension. To this lecture the present Chief Rabbi responded in a sermon entitled, "Is Judaism a missionary faith?" which was printed, and can still, I think, be read by the curious at the British Museum. In an article written by me in 1882 I quoted from it the following sentence, which sums up and well expresses the theory of Propaganda by Silence. "Judaism," the Chief Rabbi said, "has in very truth a mis-

sionary vocation to fulfil, in the highest and noblest sense of the term, a propagandism which does not rest on the imperfect agency of human words and human persuasion, but on the silent moral force of truth, truth which must and will prevail. The missionary labours of Judaism must be carried on in calm and dignified silence, by showing the world that adherence to our faith constitutes our life and our happiness, by helping to destroy prejudice and error, and by teaching the world the holy truths enshrined in the book of books." So far as I understand the writer's full meaning—and, happily, if I misunderstand, I can be corrected—it is this. The mere existence of believing Jews who, through their faith, lead righteous and happy lives, will silently destroy error; it will silently teach the world the truths of the Old Testament, and it will silently prove that Judaism is the best and truest of all religions. I will not deny that the mere existence of the Jews has been and is of religious benefit to the world. But that silence is the best way to propagate religious truth seems a most extraordinary notion. Truth must and doubtless will prevail. The will of God must always triumph in the end. But are we not to labour actively for righteousness and truth because,

since God is their author, truth and righteousness must necessarily conquer? Doubtless human words and human persuasion are imperfect, but nevertheless it is only by *their* means that truth has been and is being diffused in every department of knowledge, only by their means that righteousness has been increased. If you want to teach the world the holy truths enshrined in a book, it is curious that for more than two thousand years you have never attempted to translate that book, or make it accessible to the world at large; it is also noticeable that you conduct your religious services in a language which, except to a few scholars, is wholly unknown. There is, indeed, as we shall all acknowledge, a right and a wrong method of propagating truth, but that for Judaism the one right method must be silence, seems to me equivalent, on the one hand, to indifference and neglect, on the other to self-stultification and surrender.

At this point I must break off for to-day, but I will ask you to join with me in pursuing the subject—which has, perhaps, a greater bearing upon our Union and its mission than you may discern at first sight—upon a subsequent Sabbath.

April 7, 1906.

II

I RESUME upon the present Sabbath the subject which I discussed with you a week ago. That subject, namely, whether Jews should seek to make their faith more widely known in the outer world, seems to me by no means inappropriate for the present occasion. We are celebrating the Festival of the Passover. What is the religious essence or core of that festival? The mere details of the particular event recorded in Exodus do not greatly concern us. Many of us can no longer adhere in loving faith to its miraculous elements. Whether so many thousand Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, whether so many thousand Israelites ate unleavened bread, does not greatly matter. What we do celebrate, as it seems to me, what the picturesque ceremonial does symbolise, is the Birthday of our Religion, the Birthday of a race consecrated to a religious mission. The Passover is a religious festival, or it is nothing. The kingdom of priests was then established, even though it was a long time before any adequate religious self-consciousness of its destiny and mission awoke in the minds

of any individual member of the kingdom. We, to-day, can only fitly celebrate the Passover by making it a symbol, by putting into it much which was not in it at the beginning, but yet which gives to it now, and may, I think, continue to give to it, power, meaning, and importance. On the festival of the Passover it is not, then, inappropriate to consider how far Judaism and the Jews, or any section of Judaism and any section of the Jews, are or can be true to their ancient mission, how far they can play any effective part in the religious history and development of the modern world.

We saw last Sabbath that the theories to account for, and to justify, on religious grounds, the abstention of Judaism from all missionary endeavours were all more or less unsatisfactory. But I also indicated that the impure methods of proselytism constantly adopted by Christians of various sects, both towards the heathen and towards the Jews, have not unnaturally given the Jews a thorough distaste for, a genuine dislike of, all propagandist endeavour. In direct religious work, above all other kinds of work, the means must be as holy as the end. In religious work, above all, the end never justifies the means. This point need not

here be laboured. That force and violence, that deceit and trickery, that the abuse of trust and confidence, that bribery and prevarication, are odious and abominable methods of widening the limits of truth needs no proving, and even no telling. We who have suffered from all these methods, we who suffer from some of them to-day, are naturally inclined to extend our hatred and contempt of the methods to the end and purpose which can be associated with means so irreligious, so immoral, and so vile.

Nor would I, for one, seek to deny the measure of truth which lies in the various unsatisfactory and inadequate theories which were reviewed last Saturday. I, for one, do not even believe that any one religion contains complete truth, or that in any other religion there can be no aspect of truth, no special type and quality of real religiousness or real morality, which does not exist in my own. God lets His truth shine through many windows, and the light refracted in various ways and by various media is yet light. The Judaism which I believe in, and the adherents to which I would fain see increase in power and in numbers, does not hold that whatever is new in any other religion is not true, and that whatever is true is not new. The

Judaism which I would teach makes no such extravagant and exclusive demand. Not only does it not say, "Extra me nulla salus," but it does not even say, "Extra me nulla veritas."

Nevertheless I do hold, and you will all agree with me, that our religion does enshrine some important truths, that it does stand for vital doctrines of religion and morality which we hope to see extend their sway in the modern world. Nor can I hold that we ourselves have nothing else to do but to preserve silence; that our only duty is to keep the truth as we believe it and live by it—if indeed we do—carefully away from the sight and knowledge of our fellow-men. The propagation of religious truth by right and timely methods still seems to me a high religious duty, and especially in those who have called themselves, or have been called, the witnesses of God. The primary business of a witness is surely not to keep perpetually silent.

Again, as it seems to me, this question of making the truth known, or, at any rate, of not hiding it from view, is independent of the question whether the Jews are not merely a religious community, but also a nation. The independence of the two questions is seen in the fact that those who assert,

and those who deny, that the Jews are a nation, are recruited from opposite ranks as regards religion. Liberals and conservatives belong to both sides. A religion which *must* be limited to a single race or nation is to-day an anachronism. If the Jews are a nation, then it must be possible for the members of that nation to include believers in many creeds, and if Judaism is more than a tribal religion, then it must be possible for the believers of that religion to include members of many nations. The co-extension of nationality or religion is what we object to in Russia, and what we hold to be a survival from a superseded and irrecoverable past.

But what, it will be asked, is the practical moral of all these words? "What would you ask us that we should *do*?" "Are we to send out missions to India and China, to compete with the missionaries of other religions in their own chosen fields?" I, of course, do not urge anything so unpractical. It is impossible to take up the work where it was laid down many hundred years ago. Conditions have widely changed, and we have changed with them. Direct propagandist endeavours may no longer be within our power, and *because* not within our power, it would be idle and

silly to talk about, and recommend them. But because such direct and organised endeavours are not within our scope, it does not follow that our entire policy, and still less that our conscious and accepted ideal, must be one of deliberate silence. We have, as seems to me, to begin by changing our ideal, by breaking down our old and long-established indifference to what the outer world believes (except in its reflex influence on ourselves), by recognising that the propagation of truth must always be an ideal to those who believe that they possess it. We have to break down our exclusiveness, our comparative disregard of the movements of religious thought beyond our own borders. We must be more willing to welcome new-comers to our own fold ; we must make the conditions of their reception less difficult. And again we must, prior to attempting to exercise any influence upon the outer world, put our own religious house in order. We must try to see things as they are. We must get to learn what we ourselves believe. We must attempt to know what modern Judaism really implies, what is its religious relation to the actual faiths and doctrines of the modern world around us. We want Judaism to be more than a mere family tradition. We want to think no less

nobly of it than the Seer who said : " Behold, I appoint you as a light to the nations, that My salvation may be unto the ends of the earth." But, nevertheless, we do not want to be self-deceived. What *is* Judaism, then ; what *can* Judaism be—this Judaism which may once more, perchance, play some part in the religious history of the world ? We must clarify our ideas ; we must gradually shape them into articulate words and doctrines. We must look outside as well as inside. We must recognise those who are our antagonists and those who are our allies. We must find out if old names still mean old doctrines. We must study—so far as we can—the present religious position of the world ; we must open our eyes and perceive what doctrines are fresh, and which are superseded or perishing ; where the growing religious thought of the world has arrived, and whither it is tending. We must seek to estimate how this general thought and its conclusions affect our own position and the historic teachings of our own faith. We must then consider what in our own religion is still strong and true and capable of growth, and what is weak and erroneous and decaying. We must ask what we have to ignore or let drop, what we have to emphasise and strengthen ; where the setting sets

off the jewel, where it hides it from the view ; where the raiment of form is appropriate, where the swaddling clothes stiffen and deform.

To some extent, at least, we shall sympathise with one of the old theories about Judaism and its future, which has been partly used to prop up the doctrine that Judaism is not a missionary faith. For we, too, shall admit that what is most important in Judaism is not its ceremonial, but its teaching, not its rites, but its doctrines. If the doctrine, so far as it is true and pure, prevails, we shall mind less about the embodiment ; nor shall we, in the last resort, mind about the *name*. If Judaism triumph under another name, if we can even help in and further such a triumph, we shall be content. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us be the glory."

Such, then, is the task before us ; such the purpose and the aim, for which, and in the light of which, we should seek to study the task, and help towards its solution and accomplishment. It is a heavy task, upon which many generations would have to labour ; which needs not merely determination and effort, but clarity of thought, emancipation of mind, liberty of action, liberty of speech. I look around and ask myself : Is English Judaism

capable and willing and likely to take part in this work ? Is it free enough, is it clear enough ? are its eyes enough open, its ears enough alert ? I deeply regret, for my part, to be compelled to believe that the answer to this question can only be in the negative. And, therefore, though we are only a fragment of English Judaism, though our numbers are few and our future uncertain, I yet feel that it is only the Union, who, with small and feeble steps, and in the smallest measure and degree, can take any share in the preparatory labours of self-enlightenment, purification, and development. If *we* are not to do it, or rather if we cannot and are not to make a tiny contribution towards its accomplishment, then, so far and for the present, nothing, or next to nothing, can be done in England at all. For only we, as I venture to think, may open our eyes and see ; only we may freely follow the argument of truth whither truth may lead ; only we may open our mouths and speak.

The Servant of the Lord, according to the prophetic conception, had a certain duty toward his own community as well as toward the outer world. The witnesses of God had to bear testimony to the men of their own race. And so too, in our own

day, as it seems to me, it is a time to speak and a time to witness, not only, and not even primarily, to others, but mainly, and in the first place, to ourselves. In Judaism, as in Christianity, there are doubtless many shades of religious opinion, but, broadly speaking, there are two main parties—the traditionalists, or whatever other term they like to use, on the one hand, the liberals or progressists upon the other. And what to begin with needs saying is that liberal Judaism, in its various forms and shades, is positive and constructive. It is sometimes supposed by the traditionalists that the one aim of liberal Judaism is to destroy, that its one business and purpose is to rip up and pull down from sheer delight in negation and destruction. But that is a false supposition. To pull down what is inwardly rotten or obsolete; to pull down in order to let in air and light is one thing. To pull down for the mere fun of havoc is quite another. Religious truth can never be merely negative. Its negations are only the other side of affirmations. And religious truth is what we all aim at, and what we all hold dear. The liberal and the traditionalist are in some matters agreed, in others they differ. But the points wherein they differ are not accurately described

by saying that what the traditionalist believes the liberal denies. That would be making the one all affirmation, the other all denial. Both are at least equally positive and constructive, and where they differ, it is not merely that the one thinks the other *wrong*, but what is of far greater consequence, that each thinks that *he* is *right*. The truth as it seems to liberals is as positive and as precious as it is to the traditionalists. It is as coherent and of a piece. We *want* it to prevail, we think that it *will* prevail, because we believe it to be true, because we believe that it has the essential qualities of truth, because we believe that it will produce, and be helpful towards, the higher righteousness and the most abiding peace. Of all the strange misconceptions of our position, perhaps the strangest is the idea, however honestly held, that we ought to keep our faith to ourselves, and not to disseminate the truth as we honour it and believe it. For, within the community or without the community, it is, as it seems to me, our duty to be witnesses for the truth, the positive, the light and life bringing truth, as we conceive it and love it. Within as without the community we have to remember that if there is a time to keep silence, there is also a time to speak.

Nevertheless here too there is a right way and a wrong way of setting about the work of speech. The best and most nutritive foods are not wholesome for all stomachs and at all times; even so the highest and purest truth, in all its sides and aspects, may not be wholesome and desirable for all minds at all times and seasons. In the particular case in question, in order to secure certain ends which are common to us all—such as that of teaching little children that God is righteous and wishes them to be good and truthful—it may be highly reasonable for liberals to associate themselves with traditionalists, even on the condition that in the attainment of that supreme end much else shall be taught with which they, the liberals, are in disagreement, and much omitted which they would like to see taught. Any condition thus entered into for common work must be honourably obeyed. It can rightly continue so long as the end in view cannot otherwise be achieved. Again, so far as there is an aspect of liberal Judaism which is destructive—even although it be only destructive in order to produce a more permanent and a nobler construction—it may not be desirable to speak of it where the auditor would be unable to appreciate or apprehend it rightly. But is it not the fact—

will any one in this hall deny it?—that there are hundreds of Jews and Jewesses in all classes of society to whom free, if reverent, speech about the foundations and tenets of Judaism can do no possible religious harm, but may just possibly—if the evils of silence and indifference have not gone too far—do positive religious and spiritual good? For my part, I have not wholly lost my faith in human nature, whether among Gentiles or Jews. I cannot believe, if the faith of our ancestors were as earnestly and as widely believed to-day as it was believed, say, one hundred or two hundred years ago, if the main dogmas—I have no fear or dislike of the word—of traditional Judaism, and above all the dogma of the Perfect, Immutable and Divine Code, were as sincerely held to-day as they were held of old, that there would be as much indifference, or even as much neglect of ceremonial, as we all acknowledge and observe. Many causes doubtless combine to produce the present unsatisfactory result, but among these causes a slackening of religious faith, including a scepticism as to the Perfect and Immutable Code, is undoubtably one. It is this cause which we have to deal with; for the religious faith which has been undermined by thought and criticism, we

have to substitute another, built on surer and more permanent foundations, yet equally Jewish, equally capable of making him who possesses it warm with the love of God, eager to be His servant and His witness. I know that some of my friends think that I exaggerate the importance of doctrine, and the importance of whether a Jew thinks critically, or thinks traditionally, or does not think at all, about the Bible and the Pentateuch. They do not convince me. Faith must always be the essential element in all true religious life, in all higher communion with God. And, as to the Bible, it seems to me of grave moment that Judaism should still be held, and still be taught, to rest upon foundations which can no longer be reconciled with the assured conclusions of knowledge. Listen to this sentence from a book by a learned and impartial Christian divine of America. "In the great Universities of Europe and America, and in the leading theological schools, *there is not a single teacher of commanding scholarship who still adheres to the traditional view of the Old Testament.*" If Judaism be inseparably tied to that view, if we cannot disentangle ourselves from it, can we still be the witnesses of God, who is the author of truth no less than He is the author of goodness? But if *we can* disentangle

ourselves from it, if we can reach a higher truth, no less monotheistic, no less religious, should we not seek to do so for our own sakes, for our children's sake, for the sake of our mission and our charge?

These high ends, which, as it seems to me, are all coherent and consistent, all tending in one direction—the direction of freedom, enlightenment, religion and truth—I pray that our Union, if it continue to live, may be able, in its small and insignificant degree, to forward and to serve.

April 14, 1906.



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